

## **External Relations Committee Report November 30, 2006**

The committee approved the minutes as amended.

The committee heard an update on the Academic Enhancement Program, with Vice President Adams reporting that the Board of Governors unanimously approved a motion to establish the program and the UF Student Government adopted a resolution in support of it. The program, which was announced in October, would be funded by a \$500 per semester charge applied to students enrolling for the first time in September 2007. The funds will be used to hire 200 additional faculty and 100 additional academic advisors. VP Adams clarified for Trustee Wright that the 200 additional faculty would not be hired next year but would be added over a four year period as revenues needed to fund the positions are generated.

The committee reviewed the government relations legislative agenda and election results. Budget Requests were also reviewed. Committee Chairman Cunningham asked about budget forecasting for the upcoming session. VP Adams commented that they know PECO money will be less. Trustee Brown said this will be challenging year.

The committee reviewed election results and new legislative leadership. There are many new freshman members of the Florida House, including four UF graduates. New Florida Congressional members include U.S. Rep. Gus Bilirakis, a UF graduate. The committee was also informed that the university will be reevaluating its Washington representation in light of election results.

The committee reviewed the communications plan update including the media coverage report, which this quarter included The Wall Street Journal article on academic excellence. Trustee Cunningham wanted to make sure that this piece, and other similar pieces, are used in our recruiting efforts. Board of Trustee Chairman Manny Fernandez commented that The Wall Street Journal article was taken to the Board of Governors meeting where the Academic Enhancement Program was approved. VP Adams noted that a lead education reporter for the New York Times was just on campus interviewing President Machen and Chairman Fernandez.

The committee reviewed the Branding Update. Chairman Fernandez suggested that the goGatorNation.com website include a button 'send to friend' to increase exposure. Associate Vice President Joe Hice reported on the Office of University Relations consolidation efforts for design, photo and video services. Trustee Brown commented that there is still a need to see a consistent UF image on all printed materials. Hice reported the importance of all colleges maintaining their own identity while prominently displaying the new UF logo on all materials appropriately. Trustee O'Connell suggested a mandatory template for all colleges to use. VP Adams commented that the guidelines will be reexamined and discussed with the committee.